against budget estimates of about Rs.5884 crores in 1996-97;

(b) whether it has also been decided to "remove" non-poor from PDS system as also to increase the cost of foodgrains for them at PDS; and

(c) if so, the rationale justification thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) to (c) The proposals to streamline Public Distribution System (PDS) with focus on poor is under consideration in consultation with States/UTs and details are yet to be worked out.

Allotment of Wheat and Rice at Lower Rate than Central Issue Price

2197. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether wheat and rice is allotted at rates lower than the Central issue price by the Food Corporation of India to those hostels in the country where more than two thirds of resident students belong to SC/ST and OBC category;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of such hostels in Maharashtra presently being allotted wheat and rice at lower rates with district and hostel-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) To ensure adequate standards of Nutrition in Institutions meant for the Welfare and Development of Weaker Sections, the Govt. launched a PERMANENT scheme in October, 94 under which foodgrains (rice & wheat) are issued to SC/ST/OBC Hostels throughout the country at Revamped Public Distribution System rates which are Rs.500 per MT lower than the Central Issue Prices for Public Distribution System. Only such hostels which have atleast 2/3rd of the total number of inmates belonging to SC/ST/OBC categories, are eligible to receive concessional foodgrains under this scheme. The scale of issue of rice and wheat (in any proportion taking into account the food habits in different areas) will be as per nutritional requirements of residents subject to a maximum of 15 kg/month/resident. The periodicity of supply to the hostels will be atleast once a month; the hostels having the option of lifting foodgrains from the PDS outlets; or directly from FCI godowns; or from Civil Supplies Corporation godowns. As per assessment made by the Ministry of Welfare the total annual requirements of foodgrains for the scheme would be 2.45 lakh M.T. p.a.

(c) As per latest information, furnished by Govt. of Maharashtra, subsidised foodgrains are being supplied to 3171 hostels in the State. District-wise and Hostel-wise details of the beneficiary hostels are not maintained by the Central Government.

Accidents in Coal Mines

2198. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of coal mines in which fire is continuing, State-wise;

(b) the number of mine workers died in underground mines because of fire or water logging or accident during last five years, year-wise;

(c) the details of special safety measures Government have taken; and

(d) whether there is any collective insurance taken by Government for mine workers, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) Fire exists in 74 coal mines of Coal India Limited (CIL).